

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

11150 EAST BOULEVARD AT UNIVERSITY CIRCLE
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106 CABLE ADDRESS: MUSART CLEVELAND
SHERMAN E. LEE, DIRECTOR TELEPHONE: 421-7340

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FOR RELEASE ON RECEIPT:
FIBERWORKS AT THE
CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Fiberworks, an international invitational exhibition of contemporary fiber art, opens October 5 at The Cleveland Museum of Art. On view through November 20 will be 77 works by 49 artists from 16 countries.

Works in the exhibition reflect the emergence of fiber art as a medium providing artists a full range of expression for their creative vision. The use of fiber in the creation of a work of art is not new, but it has only been in the past few decades that fiber art has evolved from a craft, producing decorative but functional objects, into a new art form of international scope. Included in the exhibition will be the work of artists who have been leaders in this developing art form. Sheila Hicks of France, Magdalena Abakanowicz of Poland, Luba Krejčí of Czechoslovakia, Olga de Amaral of Colombia, and Claire Zeisler and Lenore Tawney of the United States are just a few of the internationally known fiber artists to be represented in the exhibition.

The works will range from the delicate lace sculptures of Marie Vaňková-Kuchynková of Czechoslovakia to monumental structures, such as an eleven-foot high sisal habitat by Barbara Shawcroft of California and Yugoslavian Jagoda Buić's twenty-foot long three-dimensional woven wall. There are monochromatic creations and pieces ablaze with color, wall hangings, and environmental works. The materials and techniques of the fiber artist have been used to create aesthetic images of every size, shape, form, color, and texture.

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2-fiberworks

One example of the new scope and range of fiber art is a work by Jean Stamsta. Forty feet in length, "Tarzan's Rope" has been designed to hang in a stairwell connecting the Museum's special exhibition galleries. The woven and crocheted work is a mixture of vibrant colors and varying textures, and hanging through four levels of the building, it offers multiple vantage points and angles of view.

Like other contemporary fiber artists, Stamsta breaks with the traditional use of fiber as a decorative medium. Fresh and innovative in concept, form, and use of materials, the new fiber art often strongly emphasizes sculptural and textural qualities.

The techniques of the contemporary fiber artist, knotting, plaiting, knitting, stuffing, stitching, felting, coiling, plying, weaving, wrapping, dyeing, crocheting, etc. differ little from those of previous craftsman. But the application of those techniques to fiber by today's fiber artists has created the diversity of expression that makes possible an exhibition of the depth and breath of Fiberworks. One of the largest and most comprehensive exhibitions of the fiber medium ever put together in this country, Fiberworks is of particular importance because of its international flavor, bringing together as it does the work of artists from five continents.

A companion exhibition, Fiberworks: Traditions and Techniques, will be hung in the Museum's educational galleries. Examining the traditional uses of a variety of fiber techniques through photographs, models, and historic textiles from the Museum's collection, this exhibition will run from October 5 through November 13. It is organized by the Museum's Department of Textiles.

In addition, twelve Cleveland area galleries will have supporting shows of contemporary fiber art, while at the Museum there will be audio-visual programs, artist lectures, and gallery talks.

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3-fiberworks

Five artist lectures are scheduled during October and November. Four will be on Wednesdays and one on a Friday. On October 12 at 1:30 p.m. Olga de Amaral will speak on Verbal and Visual Reflections, and on October 26 at 8:30 p.m. Jack Lenor Larsen will speak on The Contemporary Art Fabric: New Directions.

On November 2 at 1:30 p.m. Mildred Constantine, in a lecture sponsored by the Textile Arts Club, will speak about The Art Fabric: Mainstream of Art or Mutation? And on November 9 at 8:30 p.m. Jean Stamsta will talk about Life as a Fiber Artist. The Textile Arts Club will also sponsor a lecture on November 18 at 1:30 p.m. by the Japanese artist-designer Mariyo Yagi who will discuss her work, "The One," in the exhibition.

Gallery talks in the Fiberworks exhibition are scheduled for 1:30 p.m. daily, October 5 through October 11.

Organized by The Cleveland Museum of Art under the supervision of Cleveland fiber artists Evelyn Svec Ward, June M. Bonner, and Donna van Dijk, the exhibition is supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ohio Arts Council.

An exhibition catalog written by Evelyn Svec Ward with a forward by Museum Director Sherman E. Lee and a preface by Curator of Modern Art Edward B. Henning will be on sale at the Museum during the exhibition for \$7.50. The mail order and post-exhibition price is \$12. The catalog has 164 pages with 77 illustrations, eight of which are in color, and is softbound.

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For further information or photographs, please contact David Patterson, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.